

Minutes of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

January 6, 2003

806 Mass. Ave., Camb. Sr. Ctr.

6:00 PM

Members present: Ms. Goodwin, Ms. Osler, Mr. Moos, Mr. Cohen, Ms. Berg, Mr. Hsiao

Staff present: Ms. Zimmerman, (Mr. Sullivan)

Members of the Public: see attached list

Mr. Moos called the meeting to order at 6:05. Ms. Osler said she would recuse herself from the first case because she is a direct abutter.

For Public Meeting

1. MC-2288: 1691 Cambridge Street: For review of non-binding Certificate of Appropriateness to enclose side balconies on east elevation. By 1691 Nominee Realty Trust, William F. Caci, trustee.

Ms. Zimmerman showed slides of the property, a 1971 masonry apartment block. Tom Fondren, Fondren McGrath Architects, explained that the building is of plank slab and bearing wall construction with its short end oriented to Cambridge Street; he said the slabs cantilever out on the east wall and form a balcony that is a single-loaded corridor that is the only access to the apartments. He said this creates a substantial energy loss and that the owner wishes to put in a wall with punched windows to enclose the balconies. (Mr. Hsiao entered the meeting.) He said the new wall will match the opposite wall on the west side. He showed the original and proposed plans for the east wall. He said the new wall would be an engineered insulated cement system, or EIFS, with regularly spaced windows; he said the alteration would make the building more energy efficient and comfortable for the tenants. He said there would be operable vinyl windows in a dark bronze color and that they could help ventilate in summer. He showed a panel of the EIFS material and said the panel color would match the concrete on the building. He said there will be metal vents added to bathrooms on the opposite wall.

Mr. Moos asked for questions of fact.

Ms. Goodwin asked Mr. Fondren to amplify the relationship between the east and west walls; Mr. Fondren said the west wall had punched windows in the brick wall and that they wanted to replicate the punched window on the east rather than putting the windows in bands.

Mr. Moos asked why vinyl windows were chosen; Mr. Fondren said for ease of maintenance as they will be hard to paint. Ms. Goodwin determined that the west side windows are now vinyl also.

Mr. Cohen noted the building is not now consistent or appropriate to the others on its surrounding block and it was hard to imagine how an engineered façade would enhance the appearance. Mr. Fondren said a more substantial wall was not structurally feasible because the cantilever of the concrete floor slabs is not weight bearing. Mr. Cohen felt it would be better to add a wall with more character or playfulness. Mr. Fondren said he had investigated construction of a curtain wall with glass but that it would be quite costly for the small size of the building and might be reflective and hence more distracting.

Ms. Goodwin asked that consideration be given to emphasizing the expansion joints in the spandrel panels, to make them a true expansion joint and hence more visibly related to the horizontal lines of the existing slab construction. Mr. Fondren agreed. Ms. Berg asked about the piers on the ground floor and their support of the structure; Mr. Fondren explained the method of construction. She asked about the EIFS; Mr. Fondren said it is not stucco but an engineered product.

Mr. Moos asked for questions or comments from the public; there were none.

Mr. Moos asked for the Commission's comments.

Mr. Cohen and Ms. Goodwin agreed that more consideration needed to be given the pattern of window placement; Mr. Fondren said he tried to gang the windows but didn't think that helped. Ms. Goodwin said the west wall has a rhythm of ganged windows; Mr. Fondren said the owner had had bad experiences with sliders, which are on the opposite wall and that high-rise type windows would be too costly.

Mr. Hsiao asked if use of another material had been considered; Mr. Fondren said they had not considered clapboards because as a 5-story building, the code compliance for any wood siding would be too difficult. Mr. Hsiao said the current proposal would look monolithic. Mr. Fondren said they are committed to making the change look neutral. Mr. Hsiao said that the current proposal did not reflect well enough on the surrounding buildings.

Mr. Hsiao moved approval of the non-binding application with the condition that

further options for the composition and materials proposed for the balcony enclosure be investigated and presented for review and approval by the Architects' Committee and staff. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion, which passed 5-0 (Messrs. Moos, Cohen, Hsiao, Ms. Goodwin, Ms. Berg).

For Determination of Procedure

2. MC-2291: 23 Lee Street: For review of non-binding Certificate of Appropriateness to convert basement to living space, altering two window openings on south elevation for window wells. By Andrew Schulert and Joy Lucas.

Ms. Zimmerman showed an old file slide of the house, before the restoration and renovation work that was undertaken by the applicants in 2000. She said the slide showed the south elevation basement windows as they were constructed.

Mr. Schulert distributed photos of the house showing the south elevation as it is currently. He said the only change would be to add window wells as indicated on the plans and to change the windows in the basement as indicated. Mr. Moos asked for questions or comments from the public and the Commission; there were none.

Mr. Cohen moved approval of the application as submitted, subject to the 10-day notice procedures. Ms. Goodwin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Moos thanked Mr. Schulert for the quality of the work completed on the house.

For Public Hearing

3. MC-2289: 449 Broadway (Cambridge Public Library): For review of binding Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed site plan and massing model for scheme 4A of the conceptual design for the expansion of the existing main library building. By City of Cambridge, Alan Burne, Project Director.

Ms. Zimmerman reviewed the sequence of the Commission's prior discussions on this project including several detailed informational meetings over the last 12-18 months and summarized the aspects of the order under which this project was reviewable and the applicable criteria. She said the Commission did not normally review and approve portions of projects, but that the applicant had responded to the Commission's request, made at the December meeting, to present a formal application for these limited aspects of the project so as to enable the scheduling of a public hearing on the preliminary aspects of the project with a formal determination of the Commission on the site plan and massing model.

Richard Rossi, deputy city manager, said the previous presentations were informal; he said the Design Advisory Committee had identified what they felt was the best plan for the library expansion and that the City Manager had accepted their endorsement for the plan now before the Commission.

Alan Burne made a presentation asking for the Commission's approval of the proposed site plan and massing model; he said there were representatives of the city's design team present to address the current proposal. He said the design team had been chosen with the specific goals of creating a signature building for the "civic heart" of Cambridge, that honored and enhanced the richness of the historic Van Brunt & Howe library; he said the DAC was chosen to represent a city-wide constituency, that the programmatic space needs of the library had been re-verified, that 14 public meetings have been held in various venues, that eight different massing alternatives had been studied, and that three "short-final" approaches had been more extensively studied, with the result that the near unanimous preference from the DAC was for the concept defined as Scheme 4A. He said the architectural teams had been investigating estimated construction costs and responding to outstanding questions raised in earlier meetings with the Commission and public. He introduced Bill Rawn, the design team's leader.

Mr. Rawn introduced the design team, including his office (William Rawn Associates), Ann Beha Architects, and Michael Van Valkenburg Associates. He said Ms. Beha's office's expertise was in historic preservation, his office's in new building and that his office had worked with Mr. Van Valkenburg's firm for 18 years. He said the team reflects the three strands that make up the project as a whole: the new building, the old building, and the park. Mr. Rawn said there were a number of issues to consider in designing a first-rate library: he said libraries were democratic cultural centers, they needed to celebrate openness and accessibility, they needed natural light (both for design and energy conservation reasons), they needed a commitment to place (in this case, a commitment to the high school and the park), and finally they had to function for staff and users alike.

Ann Beha said this is a most challenging and promising project; she said the fundamental charge was to create a place greater than its individual parts. She said the dialogue had to be established between the 19th and 21st century "hands" of the

community. She said her office always starts a project with research and in this instance, the building was a gift to the city. She said she felt the commitment on this project to the preservation of both the interior and exterior was very promising. She said the end result of this costly and time-consuming process had to be an enduring building.

Cliff Gayley of William Rawn reiterated that this application is at the conceptual design stage and is focused on the site and massing. He introduced Laura Solano of Michael Van Valkenburg landscape architects. He presented power point slides of seven schemes. He said the three civic uses on the site (the Rindge Manual school, library, and English/Latin high school) originally had very legible civic spaces for each use but that many things now obscure that original relationship.

He said scheme 4A contains 94,000 square feet, locates the building program to the southeast in a mass with a two-story and a three-story component aligned with the façade of the 1884 library. He said this provides an open, continuous park space and includes demolition of the 1967 wing, thereby opening views through the site from Cambridge Street to Broadway. He said a concrete wall running between the high school and the library would be removed further opening the site and allowing better pedestrian access across the park. He said there would be a below grade parking garage and that half the current high school parking would be removed by taking down the structure adjoining the high school garage, thereby allowing the tennis courts to be replaced at grade.

Mr. Gayley said the designers had been asked to look at pedestrian and vehicular movement through the site and that he had information on before and after activities for three critical times of the day, the morning school opening, lunch time, and the afternoon school closing. He said the primary goal of site improvements is to increase pedestrian safety and that secondarily traffic calming on Broadway and Cambridge streets will also be undertaken. He said they have worked hard to determine where to place the parking garage entrance ramp so that it is in the best place on the site and that the proposed location has been staked out and site users have been taken to see the ramp proposal on site. He said other goals were creating a new forecourt at CRLS, reducing traffic on Ellery Street by diminishing the ramp use there, and fixing the leaking roof of the underground CRLS classrooms behind the library.

Mr. Gayley showed a slide of traffic for 7:15-8:15 AM on Broadway which showed traffic conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles at the Trowbridge intersections and substantial congestion at the wall area. He showed the possible pedestrian alternatives with the proposed Scheme 4A mass, garage ramp, and removed wall, indicating that pedestrian/vehicular conflicts would be reduced and pedestrian path alternatives enhanced.

He showed a slide of the lunch time site activity. He said their counting revealed that 420 kids crossed the site at or near the Trowbridge intersection to get to the pizza store on Broadway; he said without the wall and the intersection, that path would be safer. He showed a slide of the end of the school day showing similar improvements in openness and access across the site with mitigation of various bottleneck locations.

Mr. Gayley showed views of the ramp area and its proposed landscaping. He said the ramp would have a 30'-long grade level entrance with speed bumps at the sidewalk and plantings and railings to prevent access to the covered section of the ramp. He said the ramp and its access have been more fully developed schematically because their function is so critical to the site plan.

Pamela Hawkes, Ann Beha Architects, said the connection between the two buildings is also very critical but would not be fully studied until the design phase. She said they have looked at two elements of the connection, including possible models for how to connect the new and old buildings. She showed slides of the Royal Academy in London, a museum in Copenhagen, the library at Princeton, and the library at Hyde Park, Boston. She said there have been adjustments to the main site plan, including eliminating any construction behind the 1884 library in favor of construction to the side. She said the façade of the new building would be kept back from the old building and the connection will be glassy with interior connections at the second floor. She said the number of interior floor level changes in the existing library necessitate provisions for new connections, which are proposed to be constructed at the back of the buildings.

Mr. Moos explained that the Commission would first ask questions of fact on the presentation and then invite the public's questions. He said he would then ask for public comment.

Mr. Cohen asked what the nature of the Commission's determination would be tonight. Mr. Moos said the Commission was looking at the schematic site plan and massing and that the applicant needed direction to proceed even though the Commission would review the project in depth in future. Mr. Cohen asked if this included the parking.

Mr. Burne said they were seeking the Commission's approval of the site plan and general massing of scheme 4A in order to develop the design for further future review. Mr. Cohen asked if he was correct that it was not the amount of parking to be determined tonight but the access to the parking area. Mr. Burne said they are seeking approval of the scheme 4A and its related parking in concept. Mr. Cohen asked, including the ramp location? Mr. Burne said yes. Mr. Cohen asked, including the footprint of the parking? Mr. Burne said yes, in concept. Mr. Cohen asked, including the changes to the Ellery Street parking structure? Mr. Burne said yes.

Mr. Cohen asked if the intended outcome was a Certificate of Appropriateness tonight. Ms. Zimmerman said she believed that was possible, because the present application was clearly for a conceptual approval of the major site features and proposed massing. Mr. Burne said conceptual approval in some form was needed before the project could proceed to the stage of initiating the schematic design process.

Mr. Hsiao asked if any shadow studies had been done; Mr. Burne said they had not yet been done but would be and would be especially focused on impacts at the back of the building.

Ms. Osler asked about the number of pedestrians who cross the ramp area; Mr. Burne said the number was counted on site and that based on the observed numbers, the School Committee and school had been reassured of their concerns, but that the proposal would need to be reviewed further by the School Committee. Mr. Gayley showed the slides and boards again and said the ramp location is in a naturally "quiet" spot on the site, but that removing the wall to open access is critical to ensuring the "quietness" of the ramp location.

Mr. Moos asked about the parking garage proposal; Mr. Gayley said it was not clear yet if two or three levels of parking would be proposed, but the location had been well studied and would be under the lawn area in front of the library. He said one of two

required headhouses would be within the new library area and the other would have to be in an opposite location, probably closer to the high school. Ms. Goodwin asked if library patrons would use the lot with teachers; Mr. Burne said yes, but the garage would probably have separate levels for the library and high school.

Mr. Hsiao asked how many surface parking spaces exist now; Mr. Burne said there are 33 library spaces now and they were proposing a total of 200 in the new garage. He said the tennis court structure was designed for 67-68 spaces and regularly has 100 cars parked in it; he said they proposed the garage would have 70+ spaces for the library and 20-30 spaces for the high school teachers above the 100 that would be relocated to the new garage from the Ellery structure. He said the grade-level tennis court proposal would take the 100 informal spaces away from the 200 spaces now on Ellery, leaving 100 spaces in the high school garage on Ellery. He said there would be 100 teacher spaces, 70 library spaces and an additional 30 “unassigned” spaces in the 200-car proposed new garage plus 100 existing spaces in the present high school garage, or a total of 300 on site.

Mr. Cohen asked if any reduction in spaces had been considered; Mr. Rossi said the zoning board might require such a reduction. Mr. Cohen asked what the zoning required; Mr. Burne said it required 130 for the library and 130 for the teachers. Mr. Rossi said it should be kept in mind that the teachers’ use of the garage is limited, both on an annual and a daily basis, to particular times; he said the parking would occasionally be needed for special events, but there would many times when the facility would be easier to manage. Mr. Cohen asked if the underground spaces would be segregated by use; Mr. Burne said that was not yet known. Mr. Cohen asked if the total number of spaces being added to the current normal tallies was then approximately 70 spaces; Mr. Burne said that was correct and that the draft traffic information suggested that the 70 spaces represented a 20-year projected demand.

Mr. Hsiao said the traffic light at Trowbridge currently mitigates traffic flow and asked what would happen with surges in traffic from the ramp. Mr. Burne said that will be addressed by the traffic consultant and with the Traffic and Parking department.

Mr. Moos asked if there had been consideration of putting parking under the expanded library. Mr. Gayley said the current program shows that there will be program

space in the basement. Mr. Burne said the structural grid system required for parking is completely different from that for buildings and that they do not want the structural requirements of a parking garage to dictate the plan for the library structure. Mr. Cohen asked if the two-story section of the proposed massing had two stories of program space above grade and one below.

Mr. Moos asked what was the extent of the Mass. Historical Commission review; Mr. Burne said they have presented schemes 4, 6, and 7 to the MHC and explained that scheme 4 is the preferred plan. He said they have met on site with MHC staff but have not yet heard back. Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission, stated that the MHC holds a preservation restriction in perpetuity on significant interior and exterior features. Mr. Moos asked if the MHC could veto a Mid Cambridge NCD Commission decision and Mr. Sullivan said MHC would make its own determination and that might differ from the MCNDCDC determination. Mr. Sullivan said the city was seeking MHC approval for the project in principle with permission to go forward to a more detailed design, just as was being sought now from the MCNDCDC. Mr. Sullivan said he believed the proposed project conformed to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, but that the question of appropriateness for the MCNDCDC was a different question and that, while the Commission needed to come to its own determination about appropriateness, he believed the proposal met common standards for approval by the Secretary of the Interior of the National Park Service.

Ms. Osler asked for the School Department's stance on the ramp. Mr. Burne said Mr. Gayley had made the same presentation to them that he had just made to the Commission and that Mr. Burne did not recall negative comments on the ramp or the wall. He said the comments from those from the school who have walked the staked-out site with him have been concerns over skateboarding and access to the ramp. Mr. Rossi said the school has been very positive about taking down the ramp, sharing the park, connecting the high school to the new garage, the high school to the library and about better access to the park. He said the response has been positive, with reservations that the site's safety needed to be assured, and an understanding that they would work with the city, knowing that the site is a difficult site.

Mr. Cohen asked how it was determined only 70 additional spaces would be needed; Mr. Burne said Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) was the traffic consultant and would be submitting those numbers to Traffic and Parking. Philip Gray, William Rawn Associates, said they had looked at the current demand, had added the additional square footage and additional staff, and had added 20% latent demand. He said patrons and staff had been interviewed on the various means of getting to the library and that while the number of 70 spaces is somewhat flexible, it is also based on some scientific data. Mr. Cohen asked why an improved facility would not draw more patrons to use it and said he would be concerned to learn 5 years from now that in fact more parking would be needed. He said it was better to err on the side of providing more parking than less. Mr. Rossi said this was a dilemma for any site in the city, that the figures were preliminary and could be changed, for instance if the zoning board decrees. Mr. Cohen said so the issue now was the conceptual location of the parking and not the numbers; Mr. Burne said that was correct.

Mr. Moos asked if Joan Lorenz Park could be maintained functionally through the construction process. Mr. Burne said he believed the staging could be kept at the back of the park on the tennis court area and that the front of the park could be kept open until it was time to redo the grading and irrigation system in the park. Mr. Hsiao asked if the park would change. Mr. Burne said specimen trees would be untouched and that improvements would be made to Joan Lorenz Park. He said the Norway maples in the front lawn area needed to go and that some specimens would be moved. He said there would be 4' of cover over the garage and that medium-sized trees could be planted over the garage.

Mr. Moos asked if there were any other factors causing the elimination of other schemes, such as scheme 7. Mr. Burne said there were not, that it was felt that scheme 7 (moving the old library forward) would bifurcate the park and isolate the high school from the park. He said it was their intent to create a signature new building that would enhance the old building and not to put a standard addition onto the old building at the back.

At 8:00 PM, Mr. Moos called for a 10-minute break.

At 8:15, Mr. Moos recalled the meeting to order. He asked for the public's questions of fact. He said there was presentation the neighborhood wished to make.

City Council member Denise Simmons thanked the applicants for their presentation. She said she was concerned about the ramp and the pedestrian crossing to the Transportation Center. She said no one was here tonight from the School Committee and they needed to be heard from. She said she loves the design but is worried about the ramp. She wondered how drop-offs would work smoothly.

City Council member/ Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis said it was great to treat the site as one site and to have the wall come down. She asked if the pedestrian access committee had seen the proposal and Mr. Rossi said not yet. She said the attention paid to the students was excellent but weekend use also needed to be considered. She asked if the weekend use had been studied; Mr. Burne said not yet but it would be part of the traffic study. She asked if there would be walkways past the ramp; Ms. Solano said there would be 15' walkways on either side of the ramp. Ms. Davis said there would be no decrease in traffic from the west; Mr. Burne agreed. Ms. Davis said her main concerns were weekend garage use and pedestrian safety.

David Szlag, 74 Ellery Street, asked for square footage for the basement. Mr. Gayley said there was a total of 12850 sf for the basement and 23100 for the 1st floor. Mr. Szlag asked why the basement and first floor square footage wasn't the same; Mr. Gayley said there was some confusion but that they were quite close in square footage at this point because the ground floor footprint had been reduced. Mr. Szlag asked if the site plan showed proposed planting; Ms. Solano said the plan was conceptual and intended to show for instance that Joan Lorenz Park would remain open and in a diagrammatic way to show other landscaped areas. Mr. Szlag said he thought the intent of the area over the garage was to be open so as to see the library. Ms. Solano said that is one plan and that the plan is not final. Mr. Burne said he wanted to implement tree protection programs immediately and to get the wall removed. He said if the garage can be built early in the project, then trees can go in there sooner.

Karen Carmean, 1657 Cambridge Street, asked if a cost benefit analysis had been done on the merits of removing the '67 addition and high school garage structure. Mr.

Burne said the architects are doing that now and will have that information next month. Ms. Carmean said she thought a 94K sf library was too small for a 100K population.

Sara Mae Berman, 23 Fayette Street, asked if the library might not be built if the cost was too high. Mr. Rossi said the manager will inform the City Council of the costs projected; he said while there are limits, the city is committed to the site. He said if absolutely all the desired goals must be met, the cost will rise and the project will be expensive. Mr. Burne said the project is in the first step, if this concept is approved, additional figures will be obtained and if it is too expensive, they will have to retrace their steps so far. Ms. Berman said she was surprised scheme 7 was just another addition. Mr. Burne said a goal is to have a signature building. Ms. Berman said the façade elevation is more than twice as long as the original building.

Doane Perry, Cambridge Street, asked what sort of trees could be planted over the garage. Mr. Burne said Ms. Solano has indicated that if the type of tree is not one which has a deep taproot, then trees up to 40-50' in height can be planted, such as oaks and maples. Ms. Carmean asked if it could be determined how much the old building would be hurt by the construction process; she mentioned damage to Trinity Church in Boston. Mr. Burne said it is the city's expectation that the team is professional and they expect a perfect building. Ms. Hawkes said the ground conditions are very different from those of the Hancock building and Trinity Church. She said the new building would not be 60 stories tall, that all necessary precautions will be taken and that the construction of the connector will be thought through in detail to ensure it does not damage the old building.

Mr. Moos asked if any part of the library would remain open during construction. Mr. Burne said no, the old building has hazardous materials to be abated. Mr. Moos asked how the noise of construction would affect the high school. Mr. Burne said a mitigation plan needed to be developed but they will try to confine the noisiest operations to the summer. Mr. Rossi noted that the library had to live through construction of the high school and that the city will work with the school to mitigate impacts.

Ms. Berman said she did not understand how multiple levels of parking could be developed below grade but there was only one basement level under the building. Susan Flannery, the library director, said many libraries with large below-grade areas are academic libraries with limited access or with stacks below grade. She said many people

don't feel safe in large stack areas and that they wanted to have as much stack space integrated with program areas as possible.

Mr. Moos determined there were no more questions from the public and asked for comments.

Ruth Butler, chair of the DAC, summarized why the DAC had endorsed scheme 4A. She said it enhanced the Van Brunt & Howe building, that the 19th century building would reemerge from the 1967 addition and the lower portion of the new building would enhance the 1880s building. She said it had been an easy decision to support scheme 4A. She said the DAC did not want a new building whose scale overwhelmed the old but they did want a building that was "frontal" and cohesive and reinforced the edge along Ellery Street.

Ted Carpenter, 175 Hancock Street, said he was an MCNA and DAC member and CRLS parent and neighborhood resident. He said he has met with many in the room and the process reflected a genuine neighborhood response. He said the sweep of the park would be opened, the high school entrance opened and a rich civic campus developed. He said the elevated Ellery Street entrance scarred the street, but this proposed plan used space inventively. He said it eliminated the insult of the Ellery garage. He said this is an extraordinarily complex site, even for Cambridge and that the DAC found scheme 4A the best solution for all of the tough problems the site presented. He said he could not wait to see how these architects would design for the site and that the scheme unleashed rich possibilities.

John Gintell, 9 West Street, said he was a DAC member and neighborhood resident. He said the City Council rejected the J scheme for the library seven years ago. He said scheme 4A made the park one park. He said the new library is badly needed, that the staff are in dungeons now and there was no space for young adults. He said this was the best possible scheme, the design team was very good and now was the time to decide to go forward.

Lizbeth Gibb, 243 Concord, a DAC member, said she fully supports the proposal. She said much more was shown today on the pedestrian use of the site and on the ramp. She said the DAC was skeptical about the ramp until they saw it staked out and that reassured everyone. She said to remember the views of the addition are a concept and the

mass won't look like a block. She said the scheme allows the old building to be what it should be and the new building to take up the uses that aren't right for the old. She said it is a concept that integrates interior and exterior. She said it is not typical for architects to present such an array of concepts but this team's willingness to do so proves their capacity to work out the issues of the site.

Janet Axelrod, chair of the library trustees, said they endorse this plan. She said they are very satisfied with this team and its flexibility. She said they have come up with a plan the trustees supports and she thanked the team.

Mr. Moos asked if the MCNA wanted to present their power point slides; Peter Bruckner said he had been approached by friends of the park to show the impacts of the proposal on the park. He said his firm does presentations of this nature. He said he used the Carol Johnson topo plan from the 1970s layout of the park as his datum for grade and the elevation he used is 35' for the park elevation. He said the tennis court is 36' tall and the schematic volumes presented in scheme 4A had a 14' first floor and 13' second and third floors. He showed a panoramic slide view of the proposed mass from the park with the new volume inserted into a current view of the park.

Doane Perry, Cambridge Street, said the park was well served by scheme 4A and the proposal succeeded for the park; he said he is concerned that there is insufficient representation by individuals who will advocate for the park during construction.

Joan Pickett, MCNA president, said the MCNA's last opportunity to discuss this proposal was in October before the present scheme was decided upon and that the MCNA will not meet again until January, but based on the October discussion, the association's concerns had been 1) the potential change in the amount and quality of the open space, and the desire to see the neighborhood quality of the park maintained; 2) minimizing traffic incursions into the park; and 3) preserving the historic façade and use of the library. She said the current ramp placement for scheme 4A preserves open space and allows the park to expand, as well as minimizing traffic flow around the site. She said the removal of the parking structure lessens impacts there and benefits Ellery Street. She said several MCNA concerns have been addressed, and that the association wants the opportunity to review the massing, height and expanse of the proposal itself and to

review the impacts to the old building. She thanked the DAC for the improvements in the scheme.

Ms. Berman handed out copies of newsletters and MCNA votes from the time of the establishment of the park in the 1970s construction of the high school. She said the historical events of that time were not to oppose the high school construction in exchange for development of the park. She said the neighborhood wanted the park then for passive activities and the neighborhood fought very hard for the land for a long time, as it is the only open space in the Mid Cambridge. She said at the time, it was understood that all of the land leftover after the high school construction was to remain open.

John Pitkin, 14 Fayette Street, said his remarks were based on Mid Cambridge neighbors' concerns. He said the project management was bringing the project to the Commission at a very early stage, which might be understood as a means of avoiding costly redesigns later, but that all of the Commission's objectives would be affected by any decisions on massing taken tonight. He said the Commission was being asked to sign off on the whole project based on the massing. He said it was hard to imagine a project that so thoroughly engaged the Commission's objectives. He said at least a few months would be needed to address those objectives. He said to avoid the temptation to proceed too rapidly.

Mr. Moos asked if Mr. Pitkin believed the schematics had to be completed before the Commission made a decision. Mr. Pitkin said the Commission should determine what an appropriate measure for excess infill would be in this case and should use the same standard as was used 27 years ago when the high school was built. He said the two goals then had been to clearly identify the park as a neighborhood park and to maintain the park with an open character bordered by trees. He quoted Edmund Wilson on urban landscapes. He said everyone feels scheme 4A could lead to an acceptable design but he had three issues for the Commission to consider: what was the linkage between the old and new buildings, whether the main entrance should remain the main entrance, and how much height above grade was acceptable. He said all those things should be known before the Commission decided on the massing. He said the DAC deserved credit but the park was inadequately represented in that forum. He said the Commission should be a mediator and an advocate for the park.

Mr. Moos noted the time was 9:40 and said the Commission preferred not to meet past 10 PM. Mr. Cohen asked what the Commission could accomplish tonight; he said the applicant needs direction and a response and the Commission needs to clarify its concerns. He said Mr. Pitkin's points were well-taken but he felt the Commission could give the applicant direction with sufficient flexibility for the Commission to continue its review meaningfully at a later date. He said he saw two general areas for comment, one on the footprint and massing, and the other on the organization of the parking. He said he was comfortable with scheme 4A in concept. He said the Commission needed to know: 1) the connection between the old and new buildings, 2) the relationship between the new structure and the circular end of the old building, 3) the design, details and materials, which are all critical, and 4) the height of the expansion, which is difficult to judge in the absence of the design, details and materials, but which, Mr. Cohen said, the applicant should consider carefully as to the amount of program that could be accommodated below grade. He said they should also consider some further use below the tennis courts, possibly parking or program. He said even less was known about the parking. He said, again, the concept was acceptable but that 1) a traffic study needed to be reviewed, 2) it needed to be determined if the parking demands could be met for 20 years out, 3) that the understanding was the site would have a minimum of 300 parking spaces, and that consideration should be given to a larger number, and 4) that the Commission would need to see additional evidence on the number of parking spaces needed. He said he was trying to find a way of approving the concept while clarifying what was needed on the design.

Ms. Goodwin congratulated the design team on their work so far. She said it was possible to approve the concept but questioned if a certificate of appropriateness could be issued for that. She said she heard consensus on approval of the concept from the Commission. She said the design team had demonstrated their capacity to manage the process in a quality manner.

Mr. Moos also said the tone of the meeting showed that the direction of the project is positive. He said he was concerned about approving the concept. He said the enlargement of the park is positive; he was concerned about the ramp until the School Committee reviewed it; he said safety was paramount; he was persuaded scheme 4A

achieved the site goals better than moving the library forward would; he said the expansion should not project forward of the old building; the applicants needed to look hard at putting program areas below grade; he was still concerned about the height; he did not think it was appropriate to trivialize the old building; he wanted Traffic and Parking to look at the traffic calming measures and to know their reaction; he said if the applicant was comfortable with continuing the determination on a certificate, then he was comfortable approving the massing plan; he said there was no need to delay the process unreasonably.

Mr. Cohen said he could approve a certificate if it was sufficiently conditional. Mr. Moos said he questioned how approving a certificate now would affect possible appeals. Ms. Berg said she did not see how the appropriateness standard could be met in concept. Mr. Hsiao complimented everyone on the long hours put into the project. He said conceptual approvals were acceptable but said the CGIS project had had problems with the appropriateness of the massing. Mr. Burne said he had no problem with continuing the discussion, but that it was important to have the conceptual approval in order to proceed to developing cost estimates and beginning schematic design. Mr. Rossi agreed.

Mr. Cohen said one qualification he would offer was to say that if the Commission found itself dissatisfied with the height and unconvinced that program areas could not go below grade, then they might need to press for the lowering of the third floor. He said the case needed to be made for the location of program areas above grade. Mr. Sullivan said it was premature at this point to try to anticipate details, but that approval of scheme 4A in principle would not bind the Commission to future details.

Mr. Cohen moved as follows:

that the Commission approve the concept of scheme 4A with the following conditions, qualifications and requirements: 1) that the Commission be satisfied that the connection between the buildings maintains the integrity and visibility of the southeast elevation generally and the curved bay specifically, 2) that the Commission review and approve the design, details, materials and massing of the proposed new structure, 3) that the applicant give serious consideration to the use of space below grade or below the tennis courts and that the applicant report to the Commission on its findings, 4) that the

traffic study be prepared and that the Commission be satisfied as to the number of parking spaces and the safety of the ramp and that at least 300 spaces be provided. Ms. Osler seconded the motion, which passed 5-0 (Ms. Osler, Ms. Berg, Messrs. Cohen, Moos and Hsiao voting).

4. Minutes

Mr. Cohen moved approval of the December minutes; Ms. Osler seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Members of the Public

David Szlag	74 Ellery
Scott Aquilina	Ann Beha Arcs
Lisa Gomes	“
Alan Burne	City of Cambridge
Peter Bruckner	Designers Cadd Co
William Rawn	William Rawn Arcs
Elizabeth Gibb	243 Concord #3
Janet Axelrod	21 Berkeley
Joan Pickett	59 Ellery
Cara Bosco	50 Follen #509
Arlyne Jackson	276 C Pearl
Ted Carpenter	175 Hancock
Francis Fox Spinks	17-B Bigelow
Sara Mae Berman	23 Fayette
Hugh Russell	1 Corliss Pl
Chuck Redmon	18A Highland
Emmy Norris	371 Harvard
Peter Baptiste	17 Fresh Pond Pky
John Pitkin	18 Fayette
David Davison	30 Chatham
Nancy Seidman	9 Cleveland
Elena Saporta	102 Ellery
George Metzger	90 Antrim
Karen Carmean	1657 Cambridge
Elie Yarden	143 Pleasant
Denise Simmons	188 Harvard 4B
Jim Roosevelt	14 Meadow Way
David Spiller	92 Common, Watertown
Albert Puell	402 Mass. Ave.